

TO: Government Administration and Elections Committee

From: Debbie Esposito

Hearing Date: March 10, 2023

S.B. No. 377 (Comm) An Act Concerning Certain Local Election Officials' Use of the State-Wide Centralized Voter Registration System.

OPPOSE

Just recently, three more states, Missouri, Florida and West Virginia, have ended contracts with ERIC. They cite concerns over not requiring 'member states to address issues of multi state voters, board protocol procedures, lack of ERIC participation from border states and unnecessary mailings'. The goal of ERIC was to clean up voter rolls, yet the system has done anything but that. To add any additional electronic measures to Connecticut's voter rolls at this time is irresponsible as it provides no measures of data security. Just last week, Alabama Secretary of State, went to visit the ERIC headquarters in DC. Are you aware that there was no one there? No servers, computers, no employees. This is alarming! Connecticut pays them thousands and thousands of dollars. Does anyone know where our money goes, where our voter data goes? This must be addressed before any additional electronic measures are added to our registration systems.

SB 1185 AN ACT CONCERNING THE LEGISLATIVE COMMISSIONERS' RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MINOR AND TECHNICAL REVISIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTION STATUTES

OPPOSE

Reading through this bill I was struck with the following: "to begin June 8, 2004 to reduce the number of children living in poverty in the state by fifty per cent.....promote the health and well-being for children and families." This begs the question, what has Connecticut done in the past 20 years? And yet, here you are adding more sub-sections and definitions when the most basic of tasks has not been accomplished. As the bill moves on to elections, I note the following:

Lines 256-258 such broad authority should not be relinquished to the Secretary of State's office.

Lines 280 -282 have to do with ballot harvesting and the wording is vague and has no ballot limits.

Lines 309-322 There must be a provision for signature verification on absentee ballots.

Lines 363 – 372 Chain of custody of Absentee Ballots must be established and documented.

SB 1188

AN ACT CONCERNING REFERENDA, INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURES AND CERTAIN OTHER POLITICAL SPENDING

OPPOSE

Lines 1040 -1056 This gives the complainant no recourse to their election law challenge. The wording appears to provide the commission with a time tactic without assuring due process to the complainant in their election law challenge.

SB 1190

AN ACT CONCERNING REGIONAL ELECTION ADVISORS AND A TASK FORCE ON ELECTION ADMINISTRATION IN MUNICIPALITIES

OPPOSE

This is a continued waste of taxpayer dollars and time. 'Receive a grant of not less than twenty-five thousand dollars' Is there a maximum? Any available dollars would be utilized in individual Registrars offices where so many new tasks are now required.

Lines 3-54 / Lines 130 – 132 Who are the parties that identify who appointed (hired) and who has the authority to fire (when needed). It is not appropriate that these decisions happen at the state level.

Stop with the useless "task forces" and "oversight committees".

SB 244

AN ACT CONCERNING ELIGIBILITY TO HOLD PUBLIC OFFICE OR BE EMPLOYED BY THE STATE OR ANY MUNICIPALITY.

OPPOSE

'Engages in insurrection or rebellion'. Who determines the definition of these words. Now, two years after January 6, not one person has been charged with insurrection. What really is the point here and, how timely this bill is before us. Nationally, we are just now seeing the actual footage of January 6. The uncut videos that have been hidden from public depict very different events than what has been portrayed to us. So, I go back to, who defines insurrection and rebellion? The American people get to decide who to vote for. Committee members do not have the authority to apply subjective, arbitrary biases to who can hold office. The real insurrection to our country is currently happening at our Southern border. I'd also be curious. In the event someone is convicted of an actual insurrection, would they be able to vote (HB 5702) or would that crime be excluded from your voting bill?

HB 6077

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PROCESS FOR THE ADDITION OF DIVERSE STATUES TO THE STATE CAPITOL BUILDING AND ESTABLISHING A STATE HISTORICAL COMMISSION.

OPPOSE

I have serious concerns with the creation of a commission right now. The climate of our State (and country) is far too volatile to make such everlasting, permanent decisions. And, if the State has funds available for this type of venture there are far better programs that need funding.

HB 6865

AN ACT CONCERNING CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORMS REGARDING CERTAIN EXPENDITURES.

OPPOSE

Aggregating maximum allowable funds should not be allowed.

HB 6866

AN ACT CONCERNING THE UPDATING OF STATE FORMS AND APPLICATIONS TO INCLUDE A NONBINARY GENDER OPTION

OPPOSE

HB 6868

AN ACT CONCERNING THE QUALIFICATIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.

HB 6869

AN ACT MODIFYING THE QUALIFICATIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

OPPOSE (both)

Reducing the qualifications from ten years of active practice to six is not reflective of the experience required for an effective, well rounded Attorney General. In fact, given the changes and modifications made in our courts because of covid, years 2020 -2023 should not be recognized as full years of service. To reduce the qualifications for our State Attorney General diminishes and cheapens the value and integrity of this charge and is not reflective of the authority granted to this position. True knowledge is gained from active, involved experience. That is what Connecticut deserves.

HB 6870

OPPOSE

AN ACT CONCERNING RETRIEVAL BY TOWN CLERKS OF ABSENTEE BALLOTS IN DROP BOXES.

As a voter, I am appalled at the lack of security with the designation of drop boxes and the retrieval of Absentee Ballots. I demand that each ballot be secured and protected at all times and that chain of custody, by both parties, be documented and available for public inspection.

HB 6871

OPPOSE

AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTION RECANVASS PROCEDURES

There should be no legislation that removes the ability to hand-count ballots.

HB 6872

OPPOSE

AN ACT CONCERNING FAITHLESS PRESIDENTIAL ELECTORS AND AUTHORIZING MANDAMUS ACTIONS RELATED TO THE CERTIFICATION OR DECLARATION OF ELECTION RESULTS

The attempted changes to the elector process raises grave concerns over the integrity of our elections. This is a constitutional change and requires an amendment be put to a vote.